

Help Your Patients By Sharing Medical Records Electronically With Social Security



Technology is helping Social Security transform the disability decision-making process which will mean better service for applicants across the country. You can help ensure more accurate and timely decisions for your patients by sharing your medical records electronically with Social Security and its partner agencies.

This year, Social Security expects more than 2.5 million Americans to file for disability benefits. One significant change Social Security and its partner agencies, the Disability Determination Services (DDS) in each state, are making is to move to electronic handling of disability claims. The Agency believes this will improve the accuracy, consistency and timeliness of decision-making throughout the process.

To help provide more timely service to your patients seeking disability benefits and ultimately, Medicaid or Medicare benefits, Social Security asks that medical providers also adopt electronic processes when the Agency requests medical records about your patients.

If you are not already doing so, Social Security urges providers to submit medical records electronically. Here's how:

- Use your Internet connection and Social Security's secure website to send individual patient records quickly and easily;
- Use a scanner and your Internet connection to send batched patient files to Social Security's secure website; or
- Use your office fax to send medical records toll-free day or night.

In addition to helping your patients, this option can benefit you as well. It can reduce costs of medical providers for the photocopying, paper, toner, postage and staff time required for paper submissions.


The electronic submission of records has been proven successful by users since it was launched in 2003 as a more efficient and

less burdensome process for the medical community to respond to the 15 million requests for medical records each year.

Large medical providers are already entering into agreements with Social Security to facilitate their requests for medical records.

It is also important to note that Social Security's form to authorize disclosure of information is fully HIPAA compliant. Providers can -- and should -- accept a photocopy or facsimile of the authorization form in order to maximize efficiency and reduce patient wait time for benefits.

"Having an electronic folder has opened the door for us to work more efficiently," said Jo Anne Barnhart, Commissioner of Social Security. "Electronic processes can make it quicker and easier for medical records to be transferred securely, eliminate mail time, and automate handling so that disability applicants will receive a decision sooner. And it helps you, too. Healthcare providers save resources by submitting patient medical records electronically."

If you would like to register to begin using Social Security's secure website to send medical records or would like more information about the options available for submitting records electronically, visit www.socialsecurity.gov and go to  **ELECTRONIC RECORDS**, send an email to electronic-records-express@ssa.gov or call 1-866-691-3061.



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